

PUBLIC SAFETY PROJECTS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting on April 30, 2018

Members attending: Deb Schorr, Dick Campbell, Debby Brehm, Liz Standish, John Miles, Mike Rogers, Tyler Mainquist, Doug Emery, Jon Camp, Tom Casady

Members absent: Tracy Sanford

Others present: Molly Burton, Pat Borer, Mike Despain, Julie Righter Dove, Ron Trouba, Nancy Hicks

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. Chair Debby Brehm announced that the meeting falls under the Open Meetings Act.

Motion by Dick Campbell, second by Deb Schorr, to approve the minutes of the November 7, 2017 meeting. Motion carried.

Tom Casady provided an update on the radio system. Although slightly behind schedule, work is progressing with preparation for the installation of the new system. Structural support and footing work on the towers has been completed and electrical work at the tower site is out for bid. The cost of this work is in line with what was budgeted. Final acceptance testing of the new system will need to wait until foliage is at its maximum, most likely in late summer. Since the Military Road tower did not require any additional construction, he hopes it can be used as an early testing site, so users can start becoming familiar with the system. Casady added that the State, especially the Nebraska State Patrol, has been very helpful thus far with assistance, ideas and suggestions, as they have familiarity with this type of system. Most of the radio equipment has been installed in the remodeled 911 center and in the tower shelters, and Motorola has everything they need to move ahead once all the tower site work is complete. He expects final acceptance will take place in the fall.

Tom Casady indicated the remodel of the 911 center is complete and he will host a tour for the committee following the meeting. He estimated that perhaps the most major improvements made were on the things not necessarily noticeable – the HVAC system, new electrical and cable installations. Training will begin in the remodeled center beginning May 1, 2018 and Julie Righter Dove indicated the projected move in date is May 8th, provided the new mapping system has been fully integrated within the system by that time. New software installations within the center will allow for transition to Next Gen 911, which will allow for more accurate locations for cell phone callers and would also allow text to 911 capability. The phone system has been upgraded to coincide with the new radio system. The telephone system was in collaboration with 13 other jurisdictions in Southeast Nebraska.

Tom Casady and Pat Borer provided updates on the fire station plans. The City has received a guaranteed maximum price for the four stations from Hausmann Construction in the amount of \$20,173,134. This price is for construction only and does not include land acquisition, geotechnical work, environmental work, utilities and street work, and other costs other than the construction itself. Individual status reports on the various stations by Pat Borer are as follows:

Station 15 – 6601 Pine Lake Road (combined LPD/LFR station). The surcharge has been stripped off and was successful. Footings have been poured and steel will begin to go up later this spring.

Station 12 – 4405 S. 84th. The parcel has been graded and is ready for footings.

Station 10 – 4421 N. 24th. This area is currently being graded for footings.

Station 16 – A parcel has been located at the southwest corner of N. 98th and Boathouse Road, about one block north of 98th & O Streets. Closing on the property is expected within 30 days. The purchase agreement specifies that the seller will be doing site prep – to include rough grading, road-building and bringing utilities to the address, as part of the purchase cost. This site is a mile, as the crow flies, southeast of the original area sought for this station. Due to the inability to find land based on size, price, access and location within a half mile of the desired 84th and Holdrege location, the City expanded its search. Annexation and development of the area east of 84th Street on O have made the decision to purchase this parcel much more advantageous than it was a year ago. This particular site is slated for commercial development, which added a bit more to the purchase price, but that also means it doesn't raise the same residential concerns that have been encountered at the other sites.

Although more was spent on land for the four stations than originally anticipated, the total cost for the combined public safety project is expected to come in within budget, and the acquisition of land did not require the City to exercise eminent domain.

Casady estimates that somewhere between \$37.5 million and \$38.1 million will be generated by the quarter-cent sales tax initiative, which will end on September 30, 2018. February of 2018 has been the only month so far that showed less sales tax generated than the same month in the previous year since the City began collecting this tax. February saw \$3,000 less than February of 2017.

The City Council passed a resolution to notify the State Department of Revenue of its intention to end the quarter-cent sales tax initiative, effective October 1, 2018. The Department of Revenue has been notified and a confirmation was received. This notification was early, as the due date was June 3, 2018.

Casady indicated he expects to have (conservatively) \$1 million more sales tax revenue than the expected total cost of the public safety projects. He indicated he would advocate using this to purchase and replace fire apparatus. LFR is still behind on purchase of fire apparatus and they are in dire need of replacement. Equipping Station 15 will put more stress on the fleet. Casady feels the ballot measure was written in a way which should allow the extra revenue to be used for this purchase. Dick Campbell indicated the original suggestion to the Mayor was to use any excess funds to purchase replacement radios. Jon Camp indicated he interprets the ballot measure was written specifically to **not** include fire apparatus. Doug Emery agreed, stating he believes the group agreed to not fund anything other than four new stations and the radio system.

Deb Schorr asked for clarification on the cost of a new, fully-equipped engine and new, fully-equipped truck. An engine would cost close to \$500,000 and a truck could cost closer to \$800,000. Chief Despain indicated there are currently fourteen engines in service and three in reserve. He explained that, with the addition of Station 15 – requiring two engines – taking two of the reserve engines without replacing them would not leave sufficient coverage should the reserve be needed for an emergency. He explained the life expectancy of engines and trucks is about fifteen years.

Dick Campbell expressed that if the group changes how they would like the excess revenue to be spent, it would be fair to inform the citizens of this and explain the greater need to fund fire engines and trucks instead of spending the excess on radio system upgrades. Jon Camp warned that using the revenue for something other than what the voters expected will be noticed and could jeopardize the passage of any future bond issue. As a whole, the group felt a public hearing, with a resolution to take it before the City Council, and an explanation of the different options under consideration, would be advisable to solicit public input and assure transparency.

Casady indicated he would discuss this with City Law for their opinion on the wording of the ballot initiative and what he is proposing, will then report back to the group with that opinion, and will then inform Mayor Beutler of the difference of opinion on this matter, and the content of the committee's discussion.

Motion by Dick Campbell, second by Tyler Mainquist, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.